

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 005177

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA, NEA/FO

E.O 12958: DECL: 12/01/12

TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [I2](#) [US](#) [KU](#)

SUBJECT: (C) GOK URGES US/SCIRI CONTACTS, WITH SOME RESERVATIONS

Ref: Kuwait 05116

Classified by Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reason 1.5
(d)

1. (C) Summary: After a November 25 meeting with Codel Issa and the Ambassador, Kuwait's Minstate for Foreign Affairs offered to facilitate a meeting between the Codel and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq's (SCIRI's) Chairman Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim and suggested it might be time for the GOK to allow a SCIRI office in Kuwait. However, another senior official later ruled this out as contrary to a firm GOK policy against hosting offices of groups opposing any country. End Summary.

2. (C) During a meeting between Codel Issa and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah on Nov. 25, conversation focused partially on the Iraqi oppositionist group SCIRI. Shaykh Sabah told the Codel that SCIRI leader Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim was in Kuwait City and had overcome his hesitancy to speak with U.S. officials and other Iraqi opposition groups. Shaykh Sabah claimed there was no opposition leader with a stronger dislike for Saddam than al-Hakim, many members of whose family had been murdered by the Iraqi leader. He also stated that SCIRI has the largest and most credible opposition force on the ground in southern Iraq, and, referring to SCIRI's Badr Corps, a "brigade" that could be sent into Iraq if Iran allows it.

3. (C) After the meeting, Minstate for Foreign Affairs, Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah, who had served as Shaykh Sabah's interpreter during the meeting, approached Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and offered to arrange a meeting between al-Hakim and the Codel. Issa had to decline the offer due to time constraints. Noting that al-Hakim had declined a request to meet separately with Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) just two days earlier, the Ambassador asked Dr. Mohammed what had changed. Dr. Mohammed replied that the GOK had explained to Hakim that "he made a very big mistake" in turning down the request.

4. (C) In response to a question by the Ambassador, Shaykh Dr. Mohammed confirmed that no Iraqi opposition group currently has an office in Kuwait and said that it might be time to explore the opening of a SCIRI office here, or at least more regular visits by SCIRI officials (Reftel). Nonetheless, in a subsequent meeting on Nov. 26, Minister of Amiri Diwan Shaykh Nasser Mohammed al-Sabah affirmed that Kuwait has never and would never host offices for exile groups opposing any country, not even Iraq. As a small country relying on the good will of the international community for its survival, this would be contrary to its own national interests.

5. (C) Comment: Although Kuwait's support of al-Hakim is widely known, the urgency with which Dr. Mohammed made the offer indicates that Kuwait feels very strongly that SCIRI should be involved now in planning future activity in Iraq. Twice in the twenty-four hours preceding the meeting with Shaykh Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Jassem al-Khorafi also offered to facilitate a meeting of American officials with al-Hakim. However, Nasser Mohammed's comments suggest that Kuwait still prefers to maintain plausible deniability for its support of opposition groups. End Comment.

6. (U) This cable has not been cleared by Codel Issa.

JONES